



Kessler Plaza News

March 27, 2009
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The Newsletter of the Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association



THE LITTLE NEIGHBORHOOD
WITH THE BIG HEART.

Next Neighborhood Meeting:
Tuesday, January 29, 7 p.m.

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Building Our Neighborhood

Tips to help build a sense of community

The primary purpose of any neighborhood association is to build the common community. This has been the goal of the Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights Neighborhood Association for years. This is also why we have events such as wine tours, Independence Day Parade, National Night Out and the Holiday Dinner Crawls. However, building community goes beyond what the neighborhood association sponsors. It also is the responsibility of those who live in the neighborhood. Following are several examples of what you can do to build the sense of community in Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights.

Can you name your neighbors? Who lives next door to you? Who lives across the street? Who

lives on your block? One of the greatest things you can do to build a sense of community is to know your neighbors! Consider organizing a block party, hosting a backyard barbeque, or inviting your neighbors over to sit on your porch for an evening chat. Activities like these are a great way for you to meet and socialize with the people who live around you.

If a new neighbor moves in, stop by and introduce yourself. Besides just saying hello, you can orient your new neighbor to the 'hood by sharing information such as the dates for trash pickup, recycling, and rubbish. You can share the locations of the nearest grocery stores, convenience stores and pharmacies. You can also share tips and tricks for

navigating the hood—local school zones, managing traffic in the morning, etc. You get the idea! New neighbors generally appreciate learning basic facts about the neighborhood. And of course, you can always share information about your fantastic neighborhood association!

Consider sharing contact information with your neighbors in case they need to get in touch with you or vice versa.

Consider starting a mini-neighbor co-op with a few people on your street. Examples include dinner co-ops, baby-sitting co-ops, gardening co-ops and lawn care co-ops.

Try walking the neighborhood! When you see a neighbor, smile, wave and say hello!

Next KPNA Meeting Scheduled for March 31

Plan now to attend the next meeting of the Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association on Tuesday, March 31, 2009. The agenda includes the following topics:

- Community Announcements
- Crime Statistics Report from the Southwest Substation Police Station
- Crime Prevention Tips from DPD Officer Rep
- Merging of Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights Neighborhood Associations
- KP/R Neighborhood Co-op and Neighborhood Clean-Ups
- Water treatment plant update
- Neighborhood Poll
- New Business, Q&A
- City Council candidate meet and greet

This informative meeting will be held Tuesday, March 31, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ. Remember to bring your Campbell's Soup labels and/or donations to the meeting. These are given to the church in appreciation for use of their facility.



President's Corner

by CHANCE SPIKER

Dear Neighbors,

What can your neighborhood association do for you?

When the executive officers of KPNA met for the first time, our first task was to decide what we wanted to accomplish during 2009. Needless to say, we had some very exciting ideas! I would like to share with you these goals.

Our selected theme for the year is "What can your neighborhood association do for you?" We felt this was a very appropriate theme because, while the association has been very successful over the last five years—with sign toppers, National Night Out, 4th of July Parades and Wine tours—we felt that there were parts of our neighborhood that are underserved or under-represented. By working to enhance some of our current programs and by adopting some new strategies, we hope to increase both participation in and activity of the association.

Expanding the Association

About seven years ago, our neighborhood association consisted of both Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights. Ravinia Heights is a smaller neighborhood just to the south of Kessler Plaza. Unfortunately, that relation dissolved. It is the goal of the current association to re-unite the two neighborhoods.

The benefit of reuniting the two neighborhoods is that it will increase

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Kessler Plaza dot com wants you! News and information regarding Kessler Plaza is available at www.kesslerplaza.com. Click "Yahoo Group Join Now" and enter your email address to receive neighborhood email messages and notices.

Don't delay—join now! Visit www.kesslerplaza.com today and join the growing number of Kessler Plaza residents on-line.



our resources, increase participation in the association, and allow us to share information and projects that benefit both neighborhoods (i.e., the Water Pumping Station, the Median Project along Jefferson and the Median Projects along Plymouth Avenue.

To this end, the executive committee has selected an RH Representative to sit on the executive committee. This person will represent Ravinia Heights until such time that the two neighborhoods unite under one association. This person will also work to ensure that our neighbors in Ravinia Heights are notified of all the great things we are doing through the association.

Keep your eyes open for changes in the format of our newsletter, announcement signs and website to reflect the KP/RH Neighborhood Association.

Neighborhood Co-op

Another goal of the neighborhood is to launch the KP neighborhood Co-op. While the co-op will likely exist outside of the neighborhood association, we will certainly maintain a close relationship. For more information about the Co-op, please see the article in this edition of the newsletter.

Electronic Information and Resources

Producing and distributing the newsletter is a costly and time-

consuming effort. The Association hopes to move all of our communications to an electronic format. Many of these tools are already in place. For example, you can visit our website at www.kesslerplaza.com or you can sign up for our email distribution list by visiting <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/KesslerPlaza/>. By moving our communication to an electronic format, it will save the association money, and it will take a huge burden off of our distribution volunteers. And going green is always a good thing! Also, in the near future, look for a Kessler Plaza group on Facebook.com. These changes will begin to take effect over the next year, so in the meantime, we will continue to hand deliver newsletters and other announcements.

Neighborhood Poll

Our major goal this year is to poll the neighborhood to find out how the association can better serve the residents of both Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights. We've had some great ideas and some great volunteers in the past, but we want to make sure that the association is doing things that are of value to you! In other words, what do YOU want the association to do? Look for the poll to occur sometime in the summer.

Until the next time, enjoy the spring and be sure you stop and smell the flowers!
Chance

Spring Wine Tour Fundraiser Planned

The Kessler Plaza Spring Wine Tour returns on Saturday, April 25, 2009! Mark your calendars now for this fun-filled evening as neighbors and guests enjoy the taste of wines in beautiful Kessler Plaza homes.

The Wine Tour is a fundraiser for the Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association. Proceeds will be used to complete neighborhood beautification projects planned for the year.

Suggested donation for the event is \$20 per person and now your donation to the association is tax deductible.

If you are interested in volunteering your home and/or your time and energy for this project, please contact Chance Spiker at chancespiker@yahoo.com.

Tickets will be available at the door.

Kessler Plaza/Ravinia Heights Neighborhood Co-op

One of the goals of the neighborhood association is to launch a neighborhood cooperative. What is a cooperative you ask? Great question. According to the International Co-operative Alliance, a cooperative (or co-op for short), is an association of persons who unite voluntarily to meet common economic, social, or cultural needs. In simpler terms, a co-op is an organization operated by a group of individuals for their mutual benefit.

You may be a member of a co-op already and not even realize it. For example, if you are a member of a Credit Union, you participate in a co-op. Depending on who provides your monthly electricity, you may participate in a co-op. The European Union (EU) is a governmental co-op. Of course, the most commonly known type of co-op is the produce co-op where communities grow and share fresh vegetables.

In Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights, we plan to begin a Neighborhood Co-op to focus on the Urban Renewal and beautification of our 'hood. Read on to learn more about how an Urban Renewal Co-op works.

Suppose you need to replace your fence. Most people would either hire

out the job or do it themselves. In the worst case scenario, some people will simply let the fence deteriorate because it can be very expensive to pay someone else, or it can be very time consuming (and potentially frustrating) to replace it yourself. However, in a neighborhood with a co-op, you can ask your neighbors to help you! You provide the materials and the plans; your neighbors provide the brawn. Not only are you saving money, you also save time and effort and you are improving the neighborhood.

Of course, there are a few guidelines for participating in a neighborhood co-op. For example, to be eligible to apply for the co-op's services, you must first participate in a set number of other co-op activities. In other words, before the co-op helps you, it will ask you to help others by investing your sweat equity in other co-op projects. This is similar in concept to how Habitat for Humanity works.

Other benefits of a neighborhood co-op are that it builds community, beautifies the neighborhood, helps you meet your neighbors, and deters crime by keeping the neighborhood well maintained.

Since the neighborhood co-op is a new concept to Kessler Plaza and Ravinia Heights, we will begin building our co-op by designating a few projects that benefit the entire area: clearing alleys of brush and overgrowth, cleaning graffiti off public areas, and conducting neighborhood clean-ups. The co-op would most likely meet for 2-3 hours about once a month, depending on the season and the weather. Our anticipated goals for 2009 are to clean and clear-out all of the alleys in Kessler Plaza, beginning with the alley between Alco and Marvin, and working our way towards Sunset. Stay tuned for details on our first co-op project.

If this is something that sounds interesting to you... or if you have other ideas for building our community and beautifying our streets and neighborhoods, let us know. Feel free to send your thoughts, comments and ideas to any of the association officers or visit our website at www.kesslerplaza.com.



March Yard of the Month Selected

Congratulations to the home at 2526 Sunset which was selected as Kessler Plaza's Yard of the Month for March. Yards like this are what make Kessler Plaza a beautiful place to live!

Remember, the Yard of the Month committee needs your help in selecting Yard of the Month. Contact any of the KNPA officers with your vote for Yard of the Month.



FAQs Regarding City of Dallas Garage Sale Ordinances

Following are some frequently asked questions regarding garage sales in the City of Dallas.

How many garage sales can I have each year? You may conduct only two garage sales per 12-month period.

How long can a garage sale last? A garage sale can last no longer than three consecutive days.

Where must a garage sale occur? A garage sale must occur inside a building or garage or on a patio.

What type of items can I sell at a garage sale? You may sell any type of items except for items made, produce, or acquired solely for the purpose of resale at a garage sale.

Where may I place a garage sale sign? You may place one sign on the proper where the garage sale is taking

place. You cannot place a garage sale sign:

- At a location remote from the sale property
- In a manner that interferes with pedestrian or vehicular traffic
- On any utility or telephone pole
- On any tree that is located on any public right-of-way
- On any public property, public structure or public building

What size may the garage sale sign be? The garage sale sign must not exceed 2 square feet.

What type of information must be on a garage sale sign? A garage sale sign must contain the street address where the sale is occurring and the dates of the sale.

What happens if a person violates a garage sale ordinance? The City may issue the person citations punishable by a fine of \$200-\$2000 for each day that the

violation exists.

Who should I contact to report a violation of a garage sale ordinance? You should call 3-1-1 and report the violation. The Department of Code Compliance will receive your complaint and take the necessary and appropriate measures to enforce the ordinance.

Do City Code Inspectors work on the weekend when many garage sale ordinance violations occur? Yes. City Code Inspectors investigate violations 7 days a week.

For additional questions regarding garage sale ordinances, contact the Department of Code Compliance at (214) 670-5708.

3rd Annual Oak Cliff Earth Day

Join the fun at Oak Cliff Earth Day 2009. The third annual celebration of the earth and environmental issues will be held on Sunday, April 19 in Lake Cliff Park from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The park is located at Zang and Colorado Boulevards.

Organizers anticipate over 100 exhibitors at this year's event including information booths, artists, performers, food booths, pet adoptions, blood donations, hybrid vehicles, children's activities, and much more! Bring the whole family, and Fido, too.

Please walk, bike, or take the bus to the event, in the spirit of Earth Day, and to avoid parking hassles. Methodist Hospital is kindly providing parking and a shuttle for those who don't take public transportation.

For more information, visit www.oakcliffearthday.com.

Tips for Keeping Your Home Safe

Keeping your home safe—especially in today's economic environment—is more important than ever. It only takes one break-in, robbery or burglary to change your life forever. Use the following tips to help prevent you from becoming a statistic. After all, as the saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

- Make sure all outside doors are metal or solid (1 3/4" hardwood).
- Make sure doors have a sturdy deadbolt lock, with a minimum of 1 1/2" bolt.
- Always lock up your home when you go out.
- Secure glass doors with commercially available bars or locks.
- Make sure all windows, especially at ground level, have good locks.
- Make sure all entrances are well lighted.
- Trim bushes or trees that hide doors and windows.

- Don't hide your house keys under the door mat or in a flower pot.
- Keep a written record of all the furniture, jewelry, and electronics. If possible, video record your property and note serial numbers and other helpful information. Place these items in a safety deposit box or in a secure place.

When you go away:

- Ask a trusted neighbor to collect your mail and newspapers, and offer to return the favor.
- Leave word about when you're leaving, when you'll return, and how you can be reached in an emergency.
- Put automatic timers on at least two lights (and possibly a radio) to help your home look and sound lived-in.

A watchful neighbor, who looks out for you, as well as themselves, is a front-line defense against crime.



Letter from Dr. Garcia*

Like you, I am proud to live in one of the oldest, most significant areas of Dallas. The character of our community is evident not only in the historic homes and beautiful trees, but most of all in the people.

Though Oak Cliff's past is important, our future is just as exciting. The Trinity River Corridor Project could rewrite our history. And the transformation is already taking place. Wetlands have been constructed and design experts have been engaged to develop lakes, parks, athletic fields and more. But most important, the project addresses crucial flood-control issues that will protect District 1 and the entire city. The Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge is under construction and the Trinity River Audubon Center is open.

Crime is down in District 1, thanks to several key initiatives including a random gunfire pilot program, surveillance cameras on Jefferson Boulevard and a bait-car program. I am also proud of the success of several projects that continue to improve our quality of life: the new animal ordinance; garage sale ordinance; once-a-week residential recycling pilot program; Pride in Your Neighborhood Program in Beverly Hills; park upgrades at Lake Cliff, Kidd Springs and Oak Cliff Founders parks; and the work of our Illegal Dump Team, just to name a few.

It's truly an exciting time to live in District 1 and I encourage you to keep working together as a community. You are the eyes and ears of our community—so call 3-1-1 to report litter, high weeds and graffiti or to access City services. Help to make sure crime keeps going down—join your neighborhood crime-watch group or start a neighborhood association. Together we can make District 1 even better.

Saludos. Best regards,
Dr. Elba Garcia
Mayor Pro Tem
District 1

*Reprinted from Dallas Delivers Winter/Spring 2009

Municipal Elections Scheduled May 9

Dallas voters return to the polls on Saturday, May 9 for municipal elections. Included on the ballot are elections for city council and two city charter propositions.

There are six candidates vying for the District 1 council seat to replace Dr. Elba Garcia, who cannot run for reelection because of term limits. Included on the ballot for the District 1 seat are: Daniel Benchot, Justin Epker, Mark Gonzales, Delia Jasso, Sean Paul Segura, and Jesus Lara Tovar.

The two propositions on the ballot would amend the City of Dallas charter. The first proposition would prohibit Dallas from owning a convention center hotel. The second proposition would require Dallas to conduct a citywide referendum each time the city wants to give \$1 million or more in subsidies to private

developers of hotels, condominiums and retail facilities. Under the amendment, 500 Dallas voters would have to sign a petition to call a citywide referendum on any applicable subsidy.

Early voting begins April 27, 2009 and continues through May 5. Registered voters can vote at any early voting location in Dallas County. Voters who vote on Election Day must vote in the precinct where they are registered.

April 9 is the last day to register in order to vote in the May election. Kessler Plaza residents voting on Election Day will vote at the Jefferson Blvd. Church of Christ. Polls will be open 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM. For additional information including sample ballots and location of all early voting locations, visit www.dalcoelections.org.

Public Hearing Regarding Trinity Parkway Project

The North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), will conduct a formal Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 5, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., at the Dallas Convention Center Arena, located at 650 S. Griffin Street, Dallas, 75202, to discuss the proposed Trinity Parkway Project. The limits of the proposed project extend from the Interstate Highway (IH) 35E/State Highway (SH) 183 interchange to the United States (U.S.) Highway 175/SH 310 interchange to the south for a distance of approximately nine miles.

An Open House will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. prior to the Public Hearing at the same location to allow for questions and review of project exhibits. NTTA and TxDOT staff will be present to answer questions regarding the proposed project at the Open House. The formal Public Hearing presentation will begin promptly at 7 p.m. followed by a formal public comment period.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to inform and solicit comments from the public on the schematics for the proposed project Alternatives and the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the proposed tolled facility.

The project corridor is approximately nine miles long and includes a portion of the Dallas Floodway of the Trinity River, located on the west side of downtown Dallas. The purpose of the proposed Trinity Parkway is to manage traffic congestion on IH 35E, IH 30, and other major transportation facilities on the west and south sides of downtown Dallas. The proposed project is designed to improve mobility and safety and to increase accessibility to businesses and public facilities.



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Calendar of Events

March 31 (Tuesday) –Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association meeting
7:00 PM Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ.

April 2 (Thursday) – Curbside recycling pickup in Kessler Plaza

April 9 (Thursday) – First day brush and bulky trash may be placed curbside

April 9 (Thursday) – Last day to register to vote before the May 12 elections.

April 12 (Sunday) – Easter

April 13-18 – Brush and bulky trash pickup for Kessler Plaza

April 16 (Thursday) – Curbside recycling pickup in Kessler Plaza

April 19 (Sunday) – Oak Cliff Earth Day
11:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Lake Cliff Park
Visit www.oakcliffearthday.com for additional information.

April 27 – May 5 – Early voting for May 9 Municipal Elections. Registered voters can vote early at any early voting location in Dallas County. Visit <http://www.dalcoelections.org> for additional information.

April 30 (Thursday) – Curbside recycling pickup in Kessler Plaza

May 5 (Tuesday) –Public Hearing to discuss the proposed Trinity Parkway Project
7:00 PM at the Dallas Convention Center Arena, located at 650 S. Griffin Street in Dallas

May 7 (Thursday) – First day brush and bulky trash may be placed curbside

May 9 (Saturday) – Municipal Election
Registered voters living in Kessler Plaza can vote at the Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ.

May 10 (Sunday) – Mother's Day

May 11-15 – Brush and bulky trash pickup for Kessler Plaza

May 14 (Thursday) – Curbside recycling pickup in Kessler Plaza

May 14 (Thursday) – First day brush and bulky trash may be placed curbside

May 25 (Monday) –Memorial Day Holiday

May 26 (Tuesday) –Kessler Plaza Neighborhood Association meeting
7:00 PM Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ.

May 28 (Thursday) – Curbside recycling pickup in Kessler Plaza

June 13 (Saturday) – Municipal Run-off Elections

About Kessler Plaza

Kessler Plaza—the little neighborhood with the big heart—is bounded on the North by W. Jefferson Blvd., the South by 12th St., the East by Hampton Rd., and the West by Cavender St. The neighborhood association generally meets the last Tuesday of every other month at the Jefferson Boulevard Church of Christ. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. For additional information visit www.kesslerplaza.com

